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Letter from Thomas G. Clemson to Elias Baker, 1855 November 4

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The Home Nov. 4th 1855

but as I thought it too large I
took it off of the clock & have had
it packed away with my other bronzes.
As I am a vile sinner & think naked
nature fully equal to art (if you and
Aunt feel disposed) I will exchange
this statue of John Milton for one
of your naked figures, provided it be
any other than the one I have which
is called "Captif Love" A naked figure
holding a little cupid above her right
shoulder. The statue of Milton is rather
more than a foot high leans against
a pedestal upon which there is a large
volume open & holds a pen in his fingers
the left hand clasps a scroll: his head
is uncovered his hat being on the ground
his long flowing hair falls upon his
shoulders. The body is covered very
gracefully with clothes & a flowing
cloak. It does not make the slightest difference
to me & makes the proportion nearly to be agreed
to you & Aunt, you having a preference I having none
and as I know what your figures represent but
take it for granted that they are good otherwise
would not have been sent

E. B. Aked Esq.

affectionately yours
W. Clemens

My dear Sir

After I wrote you yesterday
yours of the 31st came & tho I have not
much to say I can not refrain from writing
to you how much I feel relieved to
learn that your Mirrors & frames have
arrived safe & that they took the places
on the wall destined to receive ^{them}. From
what the maker wrote me I did not
doubt but they were remarkable as to
design & finish & the largest he had
ever made. When you come to examine
them I have no doubt you will con-
clude that such things can now be
made in a week or month. If they
do cost high you will have the
satisfaction of knowing that they
are unique & few if any possess their
like. Believe that there is not
a saloon in the world that will
possess such things as you have

when you get them together. I
feel very anxious to see them &
if I could go up, would certainly do
so, & hope before long to spend
a few hours with you for I assure
you independence of the pleasure I
should have in seeing you all I
know of no larger treat I could
enjoy than seeing your specimens
of Art. The like of which I am
sure never before came to this
country let alone the Alleghany
Mountains -

I note what you say about the naked
bronze figures I am sorry they are
not such Art. I think she is per-
haps a little hypercritical. "Hon-
y soit qui mal y pense" is the
old English motto. I will write
and see if any thing like representa-
tions of Commerce Manufactures & the
agriculture of the Arts can be found

But you must understand that these
things are to be taken of found. To have
them made would be worth in itself to
take them out of the question. Artists
create a figure & study how it may
be sold & sell the copy right & the
knowledge of running a certain number
of copies which are sold. Sometimes a
thing is with man or day from an
artist a study of a particular kind
& in order to prevent it being sold
& made too common he has the
model broken. What I have done
for you I have done with the very
best intentions & knowing the premises.

It has just occurred to me that it
would perhaps be agreeable to yourself to have a figure which
I brought from Europe with me
of Bronze & representing John Milton.
It is very handsome, has been very
much admired & I am sure if the
size suits would please Aunt. You
may have seen it, for it formerly
stood upon my black Marble Clock